

Name of your Anti-Slavery Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of other Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

There were people who believed that slavery was wrong right from the beginning, and were looking for different ways to ABOLISH it. Since these people wanted to abolish (or end) slavery, they became known as the **abolitionists** and they tried to do many of the things that you and your teams talked about doing. They joined together in groups called abolitionist societies and tried to change the laws by changing people's minds about slavery. But often the laws were slow to change, and slavery was growing in the South. Abolitionists relied on the POWER OF WORDS through books, essays, pamphlets, making speeches, and other activities; all with the ultimate goal of CHANGING people's minds, and they relied on using SYMBOLS, too.

**Question:** Did you and your team come up with any of the things that the abolitionists really did? What were they? List them here:

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In the 1830s, many abolitionists were visiting Philadelphia or living there and they were starting to visit the Pennsylvania State House where the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were created, and where the State House Bell was on display. This Bell had an inscription (words written on it) from the Bible: "Proclaim LIBERTY throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof". They decided to use this Bell that had hung in the State House when the founders declared that "all men are created equal" as a symbol for FREEDOM for those who still were not equal and did not have any liberty in America: the enslaved Africans. They began printing images of the Bell on their writings, and they renamed it The Liberty Bell.

**Question:** Why did the abolitionists need a symbol, like the Liberty Bell, for their anti-slavery cause? What difference could a bell make in their fight to end slavery? \_\_\_\_\_

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As time passed, some (not all) abolitionists decided that the only way to free the slaves would be to actually FREE the slaves: to help them to escape from Southern plantations and travel to the northern states, and later to Canada or Mexico. People had been helping **fugitive** slaves (enslaved Africans who ran away to be free), and slaves had been running away on their own since the beginning. But now the effort became more organized and more extensive. This organized effort to assist fugitive slaves to escape became known as **the Underground Railroad**. The Underground Railroad is the network of all routes and all people who helped enslaved Africans escape from slavery to freedom. Remember: slavery was LEGAL in the southern states, south of the Mason-Dixon Line that divided Pennsylvania and Maryland. By the mid-1800s, slavery was against the law in the northern states. So you would think that as long as escaped slaves made it to the North, they would be free. But it wasn't that simple. There were Fugitive Slave laws that said that people in the north were not LEGALLY allowed to help fugitive slaves. Southern slave owners considered slaves their property, and they thought that anyone who helped fugitive slaves to escape was a thief. Because of these laws, anyone who helped an enslaved African to escape could go to jail (and be separated from their family, and probably lose their job) and had to pay a fine (as much as \$500 or \$1000) for breaking the law, so helping slaves to escape was a very dangerous thing to do.

**Question:** Would you still be willing to help? Would you be willing to take the risk? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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